# THE GALLERY

NOVEMBER 1984 VOLUME 6 Art Gallery of Ontario NUMBER 9


# Whistler: Portrait of an artist

by Katharine Lochnan
(*The Etchings of James McNeill Whistler* opens at the AGO November 23 through January 13.)

A lady, visiting Whistler at his Chelsea home, exclaimed, "Mr. Whistler, I have taken a boat up the Thames, and it looks just like your famous etchings." "Yes, madam," replied Whistler, "nature is catching up."

Whistler's etchings, like the artist himself, have been the subject of controversy, ever since he abandoned the picturesque style of his first set of etchings. The *French Set* of 1858 shot him to fame before he had ever put brush to canvas to paint his first salon submission. Having fallen in with Gustave Courbet and the Realists in Paris in 1859, Whistler's second series, the *Thames Set*, depicted London's unsavoury dockland around Wapping and Rotherhithe and the working men who lived there. Instead of rich shadows and charming genre subjects, the viewer was confronted with a hard black line, a picture space which appeared strangely flattened, and a composition unfinished at the borders. Whistler tried with no success to sell the plates to Colnaghi, the leading London print dealer, and they did not appear until 1871.

During the 1860s his interest in depicting physical reality paled before the challenge of capturing the more transient aspects of nature, and he began to suggest, in etching, effects of wind, rain, fog, and darkness. Stimulated by the decorative possibilities of Japanese woodcuts by Horshige and Hokusai, he began to flatten his picture space while preserving an illusion of depth in three dimensions. Abandoning Courbet and Realism, Whistler purged his work of narrative content and threw himself into an exploration of purely aesthetic questions, an affiliate of the Art for Art's Sake movement.

While he never ceased to look to nature for inspiration, he now went to nature in search of details to suggest new variations on favourite themes which, like the musical terminology he adopted to describe them, became increasingly abstract. Unfortunately they were incomprehensible to his contemporaries, and Whistler, forced into the position of antagonist, challenged the "philistines" – critics, including the invincible John Ruskin – and enjoyed confounding the "multitude." In turn, his etchings were perceived as a hoax by a populace who admired the slavish detail of Victorian engraving and prized its art objects according to their degree of finish.

J.M. Whistler (American, 1834-1903), *Bibi Lalouette*, 1859; etching and drypoint on silk satin, 22.8 × 15.3 cm. Collection AGO: Gift of Dorothy Isabella Webb Trust, 1982.

The high point of Whistler's etching career took place in Venice in 1879-80, when he was finally able to bring about a synthesis between occidental and oriental influences. When Whistler was hanging his Venice etchings at the Fine Art Society upon his return to London, someone complained they were too high. "Of course, that's all right," said Whistler. "In an exhibition of etchings, the etchings are the last things people come to see." But the public came, though for the most part to ridicule what one member of the press called "another crop of Whistler's little jokes."

Whistler had his revenge. In 1883, when he put on his second Venice exhibition at the Fine Art Society, he decorated the rooms to provide the right ambience, and produced a catalogue with carefully culled quotes from his critics. The room was described as an *Arrangement in Yellow*: the gallery had yellow mouldings, yellow skirting boards, carpet and fireplace and white felt walls. There was a "canary-coloured man" in "canary-coloured livery" to hand out the brown paper catalogue which was full, in Whistler's words, "of all that I have collected of the silly drivel of the wise fools who write, and I pepper and salt it about the catalogue. In short, I put their nose to the grindstone and turn the wheel

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Yours sincerely,

Ian C. Woolley
Chairman
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with a whirl! . . . The whole thing is a joy – and indeed, a masterpiece of mischief!"

When he died there was a scramble for his etchings, and huge exhibitions commemorated his passing. The finest collections ended up in North America, where assiduous collectors had been at work since the early 1880s. While he was acknowledged as the greatest etcher since Rembrandt, there was considerable debate over preference of his many styles and series, with little understanding of how they had evolved or what the artist was trying to do. Whistler himself promoted the idea he had come fully armed from the head of Zeus, found his way into an artistic vacuum, and developed *sui generis*.

After years of sorting through hundreds of letters in the United States, Britain, and France, and thousands of impressions of etchings, in search of dropped remarks, annotations and rare and interesting proofs, as well as culling memoirs of his contemporaries, it has been possible to piece together a logical view of the artist's evolution.

In the AGO exhibition, one of the most comprehensive to take place in decades, some of the finest impressions of Whistler's etchings are on view, borrowed from institutions in Britain and North America, among them the British Museum, the University of Glasgow, the Art Institute of Chicago, the University of Michigan, and the New York Public Library. In each section, a few key works by those who influenced Whistler at a given time are juxtaposed: drawings by Francois Bonvin, Francesco Guardi, and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, a watercolour by J.M.W. Turner, a Greek Tanagra figurine, and etchings by Whistler's contemporaries and forbears back to Rembrandt. Among the Rembrandts is the outstanding impression of *Clement de Jonghe* from the Art Institute of Chicago. In addition, there are the copper plates for his famous Venice etchings *Nocturne* and *Nocturne: Palaces*, together with the first trial proofs taken from the plates in Venice and experimental proofs in which Whistler changed the mood, weather and time of day by varying the tone of ink left on the surface. So that the man himself – a witty conversationalist, brilliant letter-writer and pamphleteer – is not lost from view, there are letters, original family photographs, and memorabilia from his estate at the University of Glasgow.

J.M. Whistler (American, 1834-1903), *Nocturne: Palaces*, 1880; etching, 29.2 × 20.0 cm. Gift of Esther and Arthur Gelber, 1982.

In the background of the famous portrait of Whistler's mother hangs a framed impression of the Thames etching, *Black Lion Wharf*. Mrs. Whistler loved his etchings and was delighted when the *Thames Set* was finally published while she was sitting for the portrait. She probably never realized that her portrait was, in fact, another variation on the Thames theme.

*Dr. Lochnan is Curator of Prints and Drawings at the AGO, and organizer of this exhibition.*

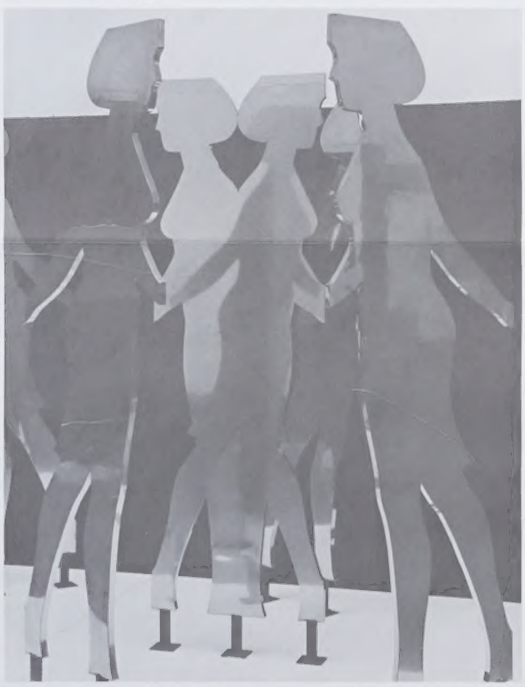
# Snow's Walking Women

Michael Snow's *Walking Woman* was a familiar presence in Canadian art during the 1960s and early 1970s. *Walking Woman Works: Michael Snow: 1961-1967* at the Art Gallery of Ontario November 3 through January 13 was organized by the Agnes Etherington Art Centre (AEAC) for tour to New York, Kingston, Halifax, London, Victoria, and Toronto.

It is now almost 15 years since the last *woman* appeared. Robert Swain, Director of the AEAC, notes the distance of years as a prime impetus in organization of the exhibition. While there have been other *Walking Woman* (WW) exhibitions, none has had the retrospective advantage of this one.

On March 15, 1962 the first WW exhibition opened at The Isaacs Gallery in Toronto. The show included 30 works, variously executed drawings, foldages, paintings, and sculptures which had in common the outline or form in profile of a woman walking. Twenty-one years later the WW series remains an impressive and significant phase in the development of Snow's work and in the broader context of Canadian, American, and European art.

The WW series can be related to some key events and artistic movements of New York of the sixties, for instance, Jean Tinguely's *Hommage à New York*, and Pop and Minimal Art. Snow's WW series similarly exhibits a sense of theatricality, an important time element, and through the use of a constant figure/form, directs attention to content. The series operates as a linear metamorphic system based on variations of a single form. At another level, the figure/form is a device used to analyze human figuration and its basic structural elements.



Michael Snow (Canadian, 1929– ), *Expo Walking Woman*, 1966-67; stainless steel and wood, 11 component parts, h. 228.6 cm. Gift of the Province of Ontario, 1968.

Although each of the works has individual artistic merit, the series is also based on an interrelationship of parts. Louise Dompierre, Associate Curator at AEAC and the organizer of this show, writes that in the manner the WW series focusses on a specific area of art, human figuration, and reveals the underlying elements shaping figural meaning, it crosses artistic barriers and, arguably, is part of the many faceted intellectual movement known as Structuralism.

Between 1961 and 1967 (when the last major WW work was exhibited at Expo '67), Snow created more than 200 works. He used a vast range of materials and techniques beyond those of the first exhibition, including films, prints, documentary, and photographic works. The WW was made in sweat shirts, items of furniture, posters and exhibition announcements. She was displayed in museums around the world. The WW were among the first works made by Snow to be purchased by major Canadian and American institutions – the National Gallery of Canada, The Museum of Modern Art, the Art Gallery of Ontario and the Canada Council.

Snow was largely unknown in 1962. During the next ten years, he was represented by his WW in over 40 group shows as well as eight one-man shows in both Canada and New York City. In those years, Snow's reputation as one of Canada's leading artistic figures asserted itself. Soon after the first WW exhibition closed in Toronto, Snow moved to New York City. From that time until the early seventies he pursued his career simultaneously in Toronto and New York. In the diversity of work created within a framework, the WW series testifies to the fusion of Snow's artistic talent and reveals the emergence of an aesthetic that would characterize his art.

# Music and art in Sunday concerts

The Royal Conservatory concerts at the Art Gallery of Ontario are "a wonderful way to spend Sunday afternoons, listening to classical music while surrounded by paintings and sculpture," says Mary Woolverton, Head of Coordination at the AGO, and a key organizer of the popular series, now entering its third season.

Gallery concerts were a Toronto tradition, once upon a healthier economic time. When AGO programs were trimmed to fit a lean budget, music was placed on hold. Three years ago, the Royal Conservatory of Music and the AGO collaborated on a series concept, subsequently presenting the idea to Mediacom Industries. With the keen interest and support of Mediacom, the Sunday Concert Series was launched October 10, 1982.

The series' mandate is to showcase Royal Conservatory staff and students, and whenever possible, musical content underscores exhibition themes. Many of the teaching staff have active performing careers with international reputations, such as pianists Antonin Kubalek and Douglas Finch, violinist Victor Danchenko, and harpsichordist Colin Tilney. Gifted young performers - students on scholarships at the Royal Conservatory - are featured in solo performances (Stephen Sitarski, accompanied by Marc Widner, and Philip Dirks, who was 12 at the time of his performance), and in student chamber ensembles, conducted in 1984 by Toronto Symphony violinist Yaakov Geringas.

The Royal Conservatory Orchestra plays an important role in the Sunday concerts and has featured distinguished guest artists such as violinist Sidney Harth and conductor Agnes Grossman. The 1983 RCO concert at the Gallery featured a young piano soloist Ronald Lopata, winner of the Royal Conservatory Orchestra Piano Competition.

This year's series is sponsored by Northern Telecom. The varied program includes scholarship students and harpists Jennifer Swartz and Mariko Anraku and the St. George's College Choir December 16; Canadian guitarist Norbert Kraft with Bonnie Silver on harpsichord and piano, January 20; the Hamilton-Bradley guitar duo, February 10; the Royal Conservatory Junior Strings under Yaakov Geringas, March 10; The York Winds, April 14; and, the Royal Conservatory Baroque Ensemble finishes the year on Mother's Day, May 12, 1985.

Concerts are scheduled at 3:00 pm in the Walker Court, and are free with admission to the AGO.

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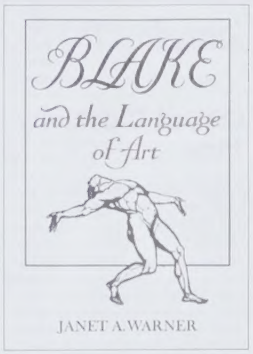


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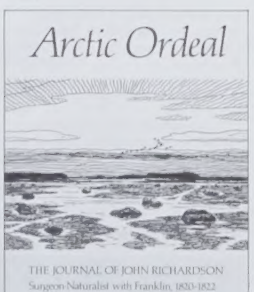


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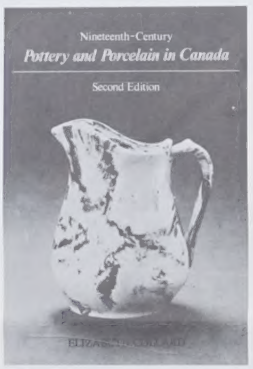


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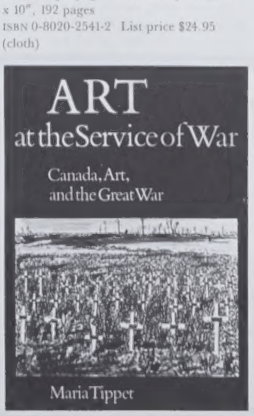


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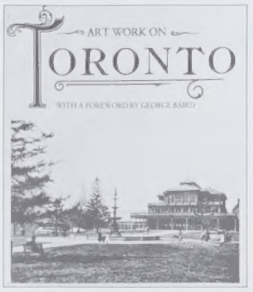


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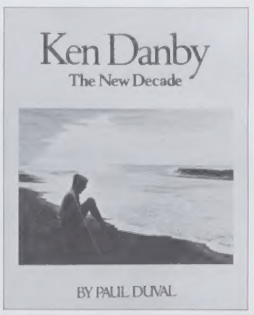


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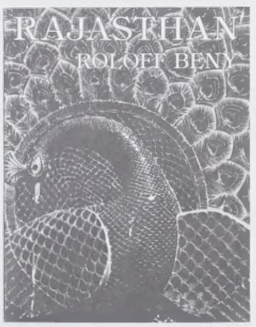

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# EVENTS

## Exhibitions

**The Etchings of James McNeill Whistler**
Sam and Ayala Zacks Wing
November 23 through January 13
The first major exhibition of Whistler's etchings in Canada, and the first internationally to place them in artistic context. Including more than 210 works, among them over 120 Whistler etchings, and works by Guardi, Turner, Rembrandt, Corot, Hiroshige, and other draughtsmen who influenced Whistler. Organized by the Art Gallery of Ontario. Opened at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, September 11. This exhibition is made possible by a grant from American Express Canada. (See page 1-2.)

**Walking Woman Works: Michael Snow 1960-1967**
Gallery of Contemporary Art
November 3 through January 13
A retrospective of the Walking Woman series by Toronto artist Michael Snow. Organized and circulated by the Agnes Etherington Art Centre. (See page 2.)

**Responding to Photography: Selected Works from Private Toronto Collections**
Margaret Eaton Gallery
through December 2
A selection of 156 photographs drawn from the resources of private collectors. This exhibition explores the outstanding contribution of photography to the visual arts since its beginnings. Represented are Atget, Abbott, Brandt, F.H. Evans, Frank Kertész, Stieglitz, Strand, and Weston, also less celebrated 19th-century photographers who documented some of the finest visual accounts of the period. Organized by the Art Gallery of Ontario.

**Kurelek's Vision of Canada**
Gallery E
through December 2
This exhibition of 49 paintings by William Kurelek (1927-1977) communicates the artist's unique view of Canada's landscape and people, and reveals his love and reverence for all aspects of Canadian life. Organized and circulated by The Robert McLaughlin Gallery, Oshawa, Ontario. Sponsored by The Mutual Life Assurance Company of Canada.

THE GALLERY
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J.E.H. MacDonald (Canadian, 1873-1932), *The Tangled Garden*, 1916; oil on board; 121.9 × 152.4 cm. National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

**Masterpiece Exhibition Series: Terbrugghen's 'Melancholy.'**
Walter Trier Gallery
through November 18
This oil on canvas by the early 17th-century Dutch master is featured in the first of a series of small exhibitions focussing on outstanding works in the collection or on loan to the AGO.

## Permanent Collection

**Walker Court, Wood, Fudger, Laidlaw, and Leonard Galleries**
Fourteenth- through 20th-century paintings from the Gallery's Permanent Collection and long-term loans; 19th- and 20th-century sculpture and major paintings from the Contemporary Collection.

**Georgia Ridley, John Ridley, and J.S. McLean Galleries**
Selections of Canadian historical art from the Permanent Collection.

**Signy Eaton Gallery**
Selections of Canadian contemporary art from the Permanent Collection.

**Henry Moore Sculpture Centre**
Plasters, bronzes, and graphics from the Gallery's Moore Collection.

**Print and Drawing Galleries**
Selections from the Permanent Collection and loans.

**Walter Trier Anteroom**
Selections from the Trier-Fodor Foundation Gift.

## Extension Services

The following exhibitions will be circulated by the AGO Extension Services during November 1984. Dates are subject to change.

**Oscar Cahén**
The Winnipeg Art Gallery, Manitoba
November 16 – December 30

**Daumier and 'La Caricature'**
The Art Gallery of Peterborough, Ontario
through November 25

**Grasp Tight the Old Ways: Selections from the Klamer Family Collection of Inuit Art**
McCord Museum, Montreal
November 15 – January 13

**The 1940s: A Decade of Painting in Ontario**
The Gallery/Stratford, Ontario
through November 11

Laurentian University Museum and Arts Centre, Sudbury
November 20 – December 16

**Rothko Memorial Portfolio**
Aurora Public Library, Ontario
November 12 – December 10

**W.J. Wood: Paintings and Graphics**
Dalhousie Art Gallery, Halifax
November 15 – January 13

**"Artists With Their Work" Programs**

**Wendy Coad: Painting**
Kingston Artists' Association Inc.
November 1-30

**Fast Wurms Films: Film Screening**
Ed Video Inc., Guelph
November 2-4

**Brian Kipping and John McKinnon**
White Water Gallery, North Bay
November 2-24

**Miho Sawada: Installation**
The Gallery & Library, Cambridge
November 6 – December 2

**Lisa Steele: Video Screening**
Artcite Inc., Windsor
November 7

**Katja Jacobs: Painting**
Ottawa School of Art
November 10 – December 3

**Nancy Nicol: Video Screening**
Artcite Inc., Windsor
November 14

**Anna Gronau: Film Screening**
Article Inc., Windsor
November 21

**Elizabeth Chitty: Video Screening**
Artcite Inc., Windsor
November 28

**George Whiteside: Photography**
St. Lawrence College Art Gallery, Kingston
November TBA

## Concerts

**Royal Conservatory Series at the AGO**
Walker Court
Sunday, November 18, 3:00 pm
The Royal Conservatory of Music and the AGO present the Royal Conservatory Orchestra with Charles Bornstein, Conductor; Winner of Mozart Competition.

The program features Beethoven: movements from Symphony No. 2 in D and Mozart: Violin Concerto No. 4, K. 218.

This concert series is made possible through the generous support of Northern Telecom.

## Lectures

**Responding to Photography: Selected Works from Private Toronto Collections**
Maia Sutnik, Coordinator, Photographic Services, Art Alts. Gallery of Ontario
Sunday, November 4, 3:30 pm
A walking tour by the curator of the current exhibition. Free with admission.

**The Etchings of James McNeill Whistler**
The Jackman Hall
A special series being presented in conjunction with the major exhibition of Whistler's etchings (see p. 1-2).

**Suburb Into City: Whistler's Chelsea**
Professor Robin Spencer, University of St. Andrews
Sunday, November 25, 3:30 pm

**'Notes of the Needle': The Etchings of James McNeill Whistler**
Dr. Katharine Lochnan, Curator of Prints and Drawings, Art Gallery of Ontario and Curator of the exhibition
Sunday, December 9, 3:30 pm

**Whistler's Etchings: The Premise of Process**
Ruth Fine, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC
Sunday, January 13, 1985, 3:30 pm

Free with admission; tickets are necessary and may be obtained at the Information Desk on day of lecture.

**Kurelek's Canada: The Land and the People**
David Wistow, Adult Programs, Art Gallery of Ontario
The Jackman Hall
Saturday, November 10, 3:30 pm
Free with admission; tickets are necessary and may be obtained at the Information Desk on day of lecture.

**The Philip G. McCready Annual Memorial Lecture on Canadian Art**

**Pictures That Can Be Heard: J.E.H. MacDonald's 'The Tangled Garden'**
Charles C. Hill, Curator of Canadian Art, National Gallery of Canada
The Activity Centre
Monday, November 5, 8:00 pm
The third in this distinguished series of annual lectures will focus on J.E.H. MacDonald's celebrated work *The Tangled Garden*, painted in 1916 while the artist was living in Thornhill. Our speaker will outline the critical controversy that greeted the painting when it was first exhibited and investigate the significance of the work not only in MacDonald's career but also in terms of the developing style and ideology of the Group of Seven.

Charles C. Hill, Curator of Canadian Art at the National Gallery of Canada and organizer of the landmark exhibition *Canadian Painting in Thirties*, has undertaken an exhaustive investigation of the many aspects of MacDonald's great Canadian paintings.

Free admission; tickets are required and may be obtained in advance at the Information Desk or by mail from the Scheduling Office, Education Services. See box on page 8.

# Films

## Noon-hour Films

All films are free with admission to the AGO and begin promptly at 12:15 pm in The Jackman Hall.

This is part of our continuing *Images of Ontario* series.

**Passionate Canadians Part I**
Thursday, November 1, 12:15 pm
The early beginnings of the Group of Seven and Tom Thomson. *col., 57 min.*

**Passionate Canadians Part II**
Friday, November 2, 12:15 pm
The development of the Group of Seven through the 1920s and 1930s. *col., 57 min.*

**David Milne: A Path of his Own**
Friday, November 9, 12:15 pm
An excellent docu-drama of the life of Milne. *col., 60 min.*

**Paraskeva Clark: Portrait of the Artist as an Old Lady**
Friday, November 16, 12:15 pm
A spunky and lively discussion of Clark's values and memories. *col., 30 min.*

**Greg Curnoe**
A new film on the London-based artist. *col., 30 min.*

**Jack Chambers: Tracks and Gestures**
Friday, November 23, 12:15 pm
A fine documentary on the beginnings and development of artist Chambers. *col., 55 min.*

**Off the Wall**
Friday, November 30, 12:15 pm
A controversial look at the art market in Ontario. *col., 56 min.*

## New Canadian Independent Films: An Evening of Films from the Canadian Filmmakers Distribution Centre

The first of a three-part series of premieres of Canadian independent film presented in cooperation with the Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution Centre.

**Potsdamer Platz**
Tuesday, November 6, 7:00 pm
Dir. Adrienne Mitchell
Approaching the problems and politics of image-making in the 1980s by an interweaving of documentary and dramatic footage, the film is an attempt to find a counteractive political voice. *1984, b/w, 60 min.*

**The Field Theory**
Tuesday, November 6, 8:00 pm
Dir. Martin Devenyi
A film that explores image-centred mythologies and how perception and understanding develop through time and experience. *1984, col., 24 min.*

## The Falls

Saturday, November 10, 7:00 pm
Dir. Peter Greenaway
Over the weekend of November 8-11, the AGO, The Grierson Seminar, Innis College, University of Toronto, and A Space will co-host Peter Greenaway for a series of film screenings of the work of this celebrated British filmmaker. The artist will be present for a discussion of *The Draughtsman's Contract* at Innis College Town Hall on Thursday evening, November 8 and for *The Falls* at the AGO on Saturday evening, November 10. On Sunday evening, November 11, A Space will screen *A Walk Through H* along with other films in the British Film Institute anthology which will be touring Canada this Fall.

Best known for *The Draughtsman's Contract*, Greenaway is now widely considered to be one of the most fascinating contemporary British filmmakers. Yet, for over fifteen years, the artist worked in obscurity and even now little of his filmmaking has been seen. The November visit to Canada will be his first.

*The Falls* is Greenaway's epic anti-documentary with an intricate 92-part structure examining the lives of arbitrarily chosen victims of a "Violent Unexplained Event." *1980, col., 180 min.*

## The Walking Woman in the Films of Michael Snow

The motif of the Walking Woman graces not only the sculptures and paintings of Michael Snow but many of his films as well (see the current Walking Woman exhibition in the Gallery of Contemporary Art). Snow's artistic career involves many media providing a richly textured approach to his aesthetic concerns. His films are neither complicated nor extravagant but concentrate on one cinematic element as the basis for the film. The following selection of work from a body of 14 films was made in conjunction with Michael Snow who will be present to respond to the audience on the evening of November 22.

Michael Snow

**Presents**
Thursday, November 15, 7:00 pm
"The title is a complex, provocatively ambiguous pun. The first section is a play based on the slipping and colliding senses of the word "presents" . . . in the last section, . . . the editing insists on the separateness of each shot constructing a vast inventory of different things and events."
*Stuart Liberman.*
*1980-81, col., 90 min.*

**So Is This**
Thursday, November 15, 8:30 pm
This film is filmed text. The film reads: "This is the title of this film. So is this. This film is an it between the author and you. It is communal reading. Within my work it could be described as a child of *One Second in Montreal* and *Rameau's Nephew*."
*Michael Snow.*
*1982-83, col., 43 min.*

**New York Eye and Ear Control**
Thursday, November 22, 7:00 pm
"This film contains illusions of distances, durations, degrees, divisions of antipathies, polarities, likenesses, compliments, desires. Acceleration of absence to presence."
*Michael Snow.*
*1964, b/w, 34 min.*

**Short Shave**
Thursday, November 22, 7:35 pm
"Vanity. Had a beard. Appearance (looks). Looking. Disappearance act. Hand-made tapes and zooms but camera-made shave. Camerazor. Handsome. Tired. Walking Woman."
*Michael Snow.*
*1965, b/w, 4 min.*

**-- (Back and Forth)**
Thursday, November 22, 7:40 pm
"His sternest film titled with a -- sign for back and forth motion, a specially rigged camera swings right-left, left-right, before a homely sterile classroom wall, then accelerates into an unbearable blur."
*Manny Farber.*
*1968-69, col., 50 min.*

**One Second in Montreal**
Thursday, November 22, 8:30 pm
". . . offers a subtle reading of times, distinctions in the duration of one very long hold and one just slightly shorter. The absence of internal movement denies the sense of temporal scale I have referred to in discussing --; that absence magnifies the presence of time as a pure element in the film."
*P. Adams Sitney.*
*1969, b/w, 26 min., silent.*

Michael Snow will be present on November 22 to introduce the films and answer questions following the films.

**Standard Time**
Thursday, November 29, 7:00 pm
"This is my home, wife, camera, radio, turtle movie. Circular arc cascades and glances spatial parallel sound."
*Michael Snow.*
*1967, col., 8 min.*

**Wavelength**
Thursday, November 29, 7:15 pm
". . . is without precedent in the purity of its confrontation with the essence of cinema: the relationship between illusion and fact, space and time, subject and object. It is the first post-Warhol, post-Minimal movie; one of the few films to engage those higher conceptual orders which occupy modern painting and sculpture. It has rightly been described as a "triumph of contemplative cinema."
*Gene Youngblood*
*1967, col., 45 min.*

**Rameau's Nephew by Diderot (Thanx to Dennis Young) by Wilma Schoen**
Thursday, December 6, 7:00 pm
"Speech, 'Language', 'Culture' — their sources, their nature . . . recorded, imaged, prove(?) that in this case a word is worth 1000 pictures."
*Michael Snow.*
Scripted and directed by Michael Snow. Shot primarily in Toronto and New York by himself, Keith Lock, Babette Mangolte, David York, and others. Acting in it are Jonas Mekas, Jackie Burroughs, Naum June Paik, Royden Rabinowitch, Marie-Lynn Hammond, Annette Michelson, Joyce Wieland, Barry Gerson, Bob Cowan, Dennis Burton, Jessica Harper, George Koller, Gar Smith, and many others. *1974, col., 4 hr. 30 min.*

## By Brakhage: Three Decades of Personal Cinema

The films of Stan Brakhage constitute one of the most diverse bodies of work the cinema has yet given us. His films belong to the tradition of personal documentaries (collage films, docu-dramas, dramatic narratives, home movies) although they are also much more — abstract films based on imagery that investigates the paradoxes of photographic illusion. This film exhibition is circulated by The American Federation of Arts Film Program.

Program I - Total running time: 84 mins.
The first program concentrates on those films that deal with a single subject: all the imagery seen is photographic, and the image content relates to a particular event.

Wednesday, November 14, 7:00 pm

**Desistfilm**
Brakhage's third film and the first in which the camera takes a truly subjective point of view. *1954, b/w, 8 min.*

**The Wonder Ring**
A record of New York's Third Avenue El, taken shortly before it was demolished. Commissioned by the artist Joseph Cornell. *1955, col., silent, 6 min.*

**Window Water Baby Moving**
This work has proven over the years to be Brakhage's most "popular" and accessible film. It records the natural childbirth of his first child. *1959, col., silent, 13 min.*

**Sirius Remembered**
A dead dog decays in the woods, and as it does so, the seasons change. Brakhage sings a lament to the dog's death. *1959, col., silent, 11 min.*

**The Weir-Falcon Saga**
Of all the films on this program, this one is the least obviously about a single subject. We see images of children playing, of nature, of the interior of a house; only towards the middle of the film is its primary subject – a sick child and his trip to the doctor – revealed. *1970, col., silent, 30 min.*

**Creation**
On a purely visual level, this is one of Brakhage's most beautiful films. Photographed in Alaska. *1979, col., silent, 16 min.*

Program II - Total running time: 81½ mins.
The second program groups together films that are largely based on a tension between conventional photographic imagery and various abstracting techniques.

Wednesday, November 21, 7:00 pm

**The Way to Shadow Garden**
One of the most powerful of Brakhage's early films, this is also one of his first works to move away from conventional photographic presentation. *1954, b/w, 12 min.*

**Thigh Line Lyre Triangular**
This film of the birth of Brakhage's second child differs from *Window. 1961, col., silent, 7 min.*

**Dog Star Man: Part II**
The separate sections of Brakhage's long film *Dog Star Man*, of which this is one, were designed so they could also stand as separate films. The image material of Part II consists of primarily b/w home-movie shots of a baby. *1963, col., silent, 7 min.*

**The Horseman, the Woman, and the Moth**
This unusual film was made out of paintings executed and rephotographed by Brakhage himself. *1968, col., silent, 19 min.*

**The Peaceable Kingdom**
This film, according to Brakhage, was inspired by Edward Hicks's *Peaceable Kingdom* paintings, but does not visually resemble those paintings. It is in a way an inventory film: a series of animals appear, often out of darkness or abstractions of colour, and each attains a momentary clarity of form. *1971, col., silent, 8 min.*

**The Process**
This is, in part, a colour-flicker film: it is made up of very short bursts of single colours, alternating in flicker-like rapidity with other colours. *1972, col., silent, 9 min.*

**The Wold-Shadow**
This film, as well as the next one on the program, was made by placing a sheet of plastic in front of the camera and then painting on it. What one actually sees is a single static shot. *1972, col., silent, 3 min.*

**Sexual Meditation: Room With View**
This film has some basic similarities to

*The Wold-Shadow:* there is a single shot of a room within which transformations occur. Bodies appear where there were none, an object on the wall vibrates strangely. *1971, col., silent, 4 min.*

**Sexual Meditation: Hotel**
Shot in a single hotel room, this film explores the ironic contrasts between erotic images and images of the room's decor. *1972, col., silent, 6½ min.*

**Sexual Meditation: Open Field**
One of Brakhage's most difficult and perhaps greatest films. His theme is the passing of childhood and the coming of sexual maturity. *1973, col., silent, 6 min.*

Program III – Total running time: 84 min.
The films of the third program are characterized by the simultaneous presence of several elements.

Wednesday, November 28, 7:00 pm

**Blue Moses**
This is one of only four sound films that Brakhage made. It is also unique among his works in that it reflects upon the dramatic film. *1962, b/w, sound, 11 min.*

**Mothlight**
Brakhage's version of "what a moth might see from birth to death if black were white and white were black" was made without a camera. *1963, col., silent, 4 min.*

**Fire of Waters**
The subject of this b/w, sound film is a suburban landscape. *1965, b/w, sound, 7 min.*

**Angels'**
This unusually short film takes as its primary subject matter a remarkable sort of light. Its imagery consists of very bright, almost white shots, with only hints of texture visible. *1971, col., silent, 3 min.*

**The Riddle of Lumen**
This is, as is *The Peaceable Kingdom*, an inventory film, but the film's list is not of animals or objects, but rather of the different forms that light can assume. *1972, col., silent, 15 min.*

**Aquarien**
Like *Angels', Aquarien* is a very short film that contains many different types of imagery. Like *The Riddle of Lumen*, its editing is non-systematic. *1974, col., silent, 5 min.*

**Sol**
A companion film to *Aquarien, Sol* is more involved with natural light. *1974, col., silent, 5 min.*

**He Was Born, He Suffered, He Died**
This is one of Brakhage's first totally abstract films. Solid colours are juxtaposed with mysterious shapes, the source of the film's power. *1974, col., silent, 8 min.*

**Nightmare Series**
This "series," in which the breaks between sections are not readily apparent at first, consists primarily of representational images. *1978, col., silent, 20 min.*

**I (Roman Numeral One)**
This is the first of a series of totally abstract, "imagnostic" films, in which Brakhage says he is trying to go "beyond picture." *1979, col., silent, 6 min.*

**General Information**
Tickets to all screenings are $3.
Entrance to The Jackman Hall is via the McCaul Street doors.
Tickets are on sale in the Audio-Visual Centre from November 1, 11:00 to 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday (8:30 pm on Thursday evening). For further information, please call 977-0414, ext. 258.

## Members' Activities

Tickets for Members' Activities must be obtained *in advance* from the Volunteer Office by following the instructions on page 8. A Member may buy up to four tickets. A project of the Volunteer Committee.

**Art & Apéritif**
Every Thursday come to the Membership Desk in the Lobby for a tour at 5:30 pm followed by an informal get-together with fellow Members and the tour guide in the licensed Members' Lounge. No tickets or reservations required. For topic call the Information Desk on day of tour. (Monthly listing available.)

**Art in the Morning**
Join us for coffee at 9:30 am served in the Members' Lounge. Tour at 10:00 am. Tickets $3, required *in advance.*

*Kurelek's Vision of Canada*
Wednesday, November 14
An exhibition of 50 paintings communicating the artist's unique view of Canada's landscape and people, toured by David Wistow, MA, Education Officer.

*Christmas at The Grange*
Wednesday, December 12
Coffee is served below stairs at 9:30 am at The Grange along with some tasty treats from The Grange kitchen. Come and catch the spirit of a bygone Christmas in this beautiful old house.

**Sunday Start with Art**
Coffee, juice and croissants are served in the Members' Lounge at 11:15 am *monthly*, followed by a tour at noon. Tickets are $4, required *in advance.*

*Kurelek's Vision of Canada*
Sunday, November 18
Tour an exhibition of 50 paintings illustrating the artist's personal view of Canada and its people.

*Walking Woman Works: Michael Snow 1960-1967*
Sunday, December 9
A retrospective of the work of Toronto artist, Michael Snow, from 1960-67.

**Special Evenings for Members**
Tickets are $20 including tax and gratuity, required *in advance.* If a special diet is required, please inform the Volunteer Office when ordering tickets. (Note: starting November, dinner at 6:00 pm and tour at 7:30 pm, except Christmas tour).

*Walking Woman Works: Michael Snow 1960-1967*
Wednesday, November 14
Dinner in The Restaurant at 6:00 pm is followed by a tour of this retrospective at 7:30 pm with guest speaker Avrom Isaacs, Isaacs Gallery.

*Christmas in the Nineteenth Century*
Wednesday, December 5
The halls are decked, then rest ye merry at The Grange. Come sample a little Christmas cheer. Hot mulled cider will be served to guests *below stairs* at 6:00 pm. Warm to a lovely glow of hearthfire and a Christmas past that pervades this beautiful house. Then sit down to a delicious dinner in The Restaurant at 7:30 pm.

### Grange Lecture Series
Tickets must be obtained *in advance* from The Grange. Entrance is through the AGO. See instructions for ordering on page 8.

**Luncheon Lecture Series**
The Grange Music Room, 11:00 am
*Silk Bonnets and Straw Hats*, a lecture series on the nineteenth-century gentlewoman, takes place in The Grange, one of the earliest Georgian homes in the town of York. Lectures are followed by an informal luncheon presented by The Grange Volunteer Committee.
October 30: *City Life*
November 13: *Country Life*
November 27 or 28: *Christmas Traditions*
Tickets: Members $7, non-Members $10.50.

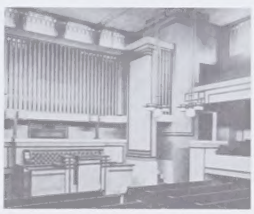
**Evening Lecture Series**
The Grange Music Room, 7:30 pm
December 12: *A Victorian Christmas* – story & song with Daniel Hyatt
Tickets: Members $7, non-Members $10.50 (includes refreshments).

## Art Tours

Brochures for the following art tours available on request from the Volunteer Office. A project of the Volunteer Committee.

**Madrid and Barcelona**
April 25–May 5, 1985
Enjoy the changing art, architecture, landscape, and cuisine of Spain as we travel from Castilian Madrid and Toledo to Barcelona, the cultural centre of Catalonia. See the works of El Greco, Goya, Picasso, Miró, and Gaudí – in a feast of Spanish art.

**Chicago**



Unity Church, Chicago

May 11-14, 1985
A long weekend with Eb and Jane Zeidler viewing the architecture of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Frank Lloyd Wright. Visit the Art Institute, the International Art Fair, private collections and private residences.

**Looking Ahead . . .**
New Mexico in early Fall 1985
Italy in Fall 1985: Three consecutive one-week trips to Venice, Florence, and Rome – take one, take two, or treat yourself to all three.

## Talks and Tours

Gallery Talks are free with admission and make visits more enjoyable through stimulating discussion. Learn about artists and popular themes over the centuries, confront essential issues in contemporary art, and increase visual awareness. Topics available at the Information Desk. Join us during November:

Tuesday to Thursday at 12:15 pm and 2:00 pm
Thursday at 7:30 pm
Friday at 11:15 am* and 2:00 pm
Saturday at 2:00 pm** and 4:00 pm
Sunday at 1:00 pm and 4:00 pm
Sunday "Talk of the Week" by Gallery staff at 2:00 pm

* *Artful Conversation*, a new program offered every Friday, features a half-hour Gallery Talk followed by an informal discussion over coffee.
** This talk, on the last Saturday of each month, will be signed for the hearing impaired.

For group tours contact the Education Scheduling Office, ext. 200 or 202.

## The Grange

Once a centre of social and political life in Upper Canada, and now among the most popular museums in Toronto, The Grange has been restored to a Gentleman's House of the mid-1830s.

Entrance through the AGO. Free with admission. Adult tours are arranged by calling 977-0414, ext. 237. For school tours, call ext. 200. See Members' Activities for information on lecture series. A project of the Volunteer Committee.

Scene from *The Falls*, directed by Peter Greenway.

### Art Gallery of Ontario — Annual Giving Fund

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# A holiday tradition at the AGO

Dancers and choirs among snowmen in the Walker Court and 19th-century holiday traditions in The Grange . . . it's Christmas at the Art Gallery of Ontario. On December 1 and 2, the third annual *A Celebration* combines special programs, events, and exhibition tours, with holiday themes.

This year's festival weekend is highlighted by a performance of dancers from Les Ballet Jazz Dance Centre and the Children's Dance Theatre. It has become *A Celebration* tradition to invite local schools to decorate the large central court of the Gallery. The results are often delightfully whimsical and always original. Community colleges in Toronto and area have been invited to create "Snowmen" decorations.

Walter Trier (Canadian, b. Prague 1890-1951), *The Toy Mountain*, 1924; watercolour and pencil on paper, 45.1 × 34.6 cm. Art Gallery of Ontario, Gift of the Trier-Fodor Foundation, 1977.

The engaging *Chu Chung and the Dragon's Dance*, a book for children, will be read by author Ian Wallace (who is also a part-time AGO information officer). Wallace, whose charming watercolours illustrate the stories, will be on hand to sign copies of his book, published earlier this year in New York.

Each year The Grange celebrates a romantic, old-fashioned, 19th-century Christmas with traditional decorations and baking. Family activities include choirs, tours, spot prizes, and browsing for gifts – books, posters, jewellery, stocking stuffers, home baking, and preserves – in the shops. The Restaurant, Members' Lounge, and Coffee Shop will be open for dining and refreshments throughout the festive weekend.

## Hands On

Hands On is a family program aimed at developing the child's sensitivity to works of art. For children, ages 4 to 12, accompanied by an adult. Sessions Sundays, 1:00 pm, 2:00 pm, and 3:00 pm. Tickets obtained from the Information Desk, and limited to 30 per hour. Hands On is a project of the Elementary Level Programs, Education Services Division.

## Gallery Hopping

A project of the Volunteer Committee.

**C-I-L: A Magnificent Corporate Collector**
C-I-L House, 90 Sheppard Ave. E.
(Yonge at Sheppard subway)
Tuesday, November 20, 7:45 pm

View examples of large-scale art by 12 Canadian artists who were commissioned to create works for the contemporary architecture of C-I-L House. Special guest William Boyle, director of The Art Gallery at Harbourfront who acted as art consultant, will tour us through this brilliant collaboration of art and architecture.

Tickets $6, refreshments included. Order from the Volunteer Office by following instructions on page 8. A Member may buy up to 4 tickets.

## Shops and Services

**The Members' Lounge**
Meet for drinks or a light luncheon in the elegant room overlooking the Walker Court, reserved for Members and their guests. A selective menu. Fully licensed. No reservations.

**The Norma Ridley Reading Room**
A quiet space off the Members' Lounge, reserved for reading exhibition catalogues or current art periodicals and magazines.

**Art Rental Service**
Reflecting Toronto's art scene, this extensive selection of paintings, prints, photographs, and sculptures changes frequently. Rent or purchase. A project of the Volunteer Committee.

**The Reproduction Shop**
Posters and reproductions to brighten your home or office, framed or museum mounted. 10% Members' discount. A project of the Volunteer Committee.

**The Jewellery Shop**
Features superb designer jewellery by Canadian and international artists. Choose custom designs for special company presentations, speaker's gifts and volume convention items. A project of the Volunteer Committee.

**Art Cart**
Party favours, gifts, school supplies and other art-related trinkets for children of all ages. A project of the Junior Committee.

**The Impulse Shop**
A variety of gifts, items to stimulate children's creativity, and unique objects reflecting the heritage of The Grange. A new project of the Volunteer Committee.

**The Restaurant**
The popular main-floor dining room offers a diverse and moderately priced menu. Fully licensed. Reservations accepted.

**The Coffee Shop**
A pleasant stop on your AGO tour, for a snack or a cup of gourmet coffee.

## General Information

**Admission**
Adults: $3.50
Seniors with cards: $1.50; FREE on Fridays
Students, full-time with cards: $1.50
Family (2 adults with children under 19): $7
Members, accompanied children under 12: FREE
Thursdays, 5:30–9:00 pm: FREE to everyone

To protect works of art, we ask visitors to major exhibitions to check strollers, backpacks (frontpacks acceptable), large cases, parcels, and umbrellas.

**Membership**
Categories include: Individual $30; Family $40; Student $15; Supporting $100 (tax deductible). Visa, MasterCard, and American Express accepted.

**Gallery Hours**
Tuesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday: 11:00 am–5:30 pm; Wednesday, Thursday: 11:00 am–9:00 pm. Closed Monday (The Restaurant and Shops open).

**The Grange Hours**
Daily 12:00–4:00 pm; Thursday 12:00–4:00 pm and 6:00–9:00 pm. Closed Monday.

**Gallery Shops**
The Book Shop and The Reproduction Shop are open daily 10:30 am–5:30 pm; Wednesday, Thursday 10:30 am–9:00 pm; The Jewellery Shop: Monday 12:00–4:00 pm and regular Gallery hours; The Impulse Shop: regular Gallery hours; Art Cart: Tuesday–Friday 11:30 am–3:00 pm.

**Art Rental Service**
Open for viewing regular Gallery hours. Open for business Tuesday to Sunday 11:00 am–4:00 pm; Thursday 11:00 am–9:00 pm.

**Edward P. Taylor Audio-Visual Centre**
Open Tuesday to Friday from 11:00 am–5:00 pm, Thursday to 8:30 pm.

**The Restaurant**
Luncheon served daily from 11:30 am. Dinner served Wednesday and Thursday 5:00–8:30 pm.

**The Coffee Shop**
Open Tuesday to Sunday 11:00 am–5:00 pm. Closed Monday.

**The Members' Lounge**
Open to Members and their guests from noon–5:30 pm; Wednesday and Thursday from noon–9:00 pm. Closed Monday.

**Cameras**
To protect works of art, we ask visitors not to take lighting units, flashes or tripods into the galleries. Many works may not be photographed; please check with security guard. All photographs must be for personal use. Thank you for your cooperation.

**Address/Telephone**
317 Dundas Street West, Toronto, Ontario M5T 1G4 (416) 977-0414.

### HOW TO ORDER

For tickets, reservations, course registration, information, please follow instructions in Events listings and the following procedure:

Address the *department specified* in Events' listing.

Specify date, name of event, and number of tickets.

Indicate your name, address (with postal code) and phone numbers.

For tickets include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Enclose a cheque payable to the Art Gallery of Ontario.

*Please do not combine requests or cheques to different departments.*

### ADDRESS CHANGE

Please inform the Membership Office by:

Mailing new address with a previous mailing label OR

Telephoning new address giving your membership number (on mailing label).

THE GALLERY
Art Gallery of Ontario
317 Dundas Street West
Toronto, Ontario
M5T 1G4

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